

## About the National Sexual Assault Telephone



**Need help?**-Call **800.656.HOPE (4673)** to be connected with a trained staff member from a sexual assault service provider in your area.

**How does it work?**-When you call **800.656.HOPE (4673)**, you'll be routed to a local RAINN affiliate organization based on the first six digits of your phone number. Cell phone callers have the option to enter the ZIP code of their current location to more accurately locate the nearest sexual assault service provider.

### Telephone Hotline Terms of Service-How can the hotline help me?

Calling the National Sexual Assault Hotline gives you access to a range of free services including:

- Confidential support from a trained staff member
- Support finding a local health facility that is trained to care for survivors of sexual assault and offers services like sexual assault forensic exams
- Someone to help you talk through what happened
- Local resources that can assist with your next steps toward healing and recovery
- Referrals for long term support in your area
- Information about the laws in your community
- Basic information about medical concerns

**Is it confidential?**-The National Sexual Assault Hotline is a safe, confidential service. When you call the hotline, only the first six numbers of the phone number are used to route the call, and your complete phone number is never stored in our system. Most states do have laws that require local staff to contact authorities in certain situations, like if there is a child or vulnerable adult who is in danger.

While almost all callers are connected directly to a staff member or volunteer at a local sexual assault service provider, a handful of providers use an answering service after daytime business hours. This service helps manage the flow of calls. If all staff members are busy, you may choose to leave a phone number with the answering service. In this case, the number will be confidential and will be given directly to the organization's staff member for a callback. If you reach an answering service, you can try calling back after some time has passed, or you can choose to call during regular business hours when more staff members are available. You can also access 24/7 help online by visiting [online.rainn.org](https://www.online.rainn.org).

**Who are the sexual assault service providers?**-Sexual assault service providers are organizations or agencies dedicated to supporting survivors of sexual assault. The providers who answer calls placed to the hotline are known as RAINN affiliates. To be part of the National Sexual Assault Hotline, affiliates must agree to uphold RAINN's confidentiality standards. That means:

- Never releasing records or information about the call without the consent of the caller, except when obligated by law
- Only making reports to the police or other agencies when the caller consents, unless obligated by law
- Agreeing to RAINN's non-discrimination policy

To learn more about how a provider can become an affiliate of the National Sexual Assault Hotline, visit the [Sexual Assault Service Provider information page](#). Volunteer opportunities for the National Sexual Assault Hotline are coordinated through these local providers. [Search for volunteer opportunities](#) near you.

**How was the National Sexual Assault Hotline created?**-The National Sexual Assault Hotline was the nation's first decentralized hotline, connecting those in need with help in their local communities. It's made up of a network of independent sexual assault service providers, vetted by RAINN, who answer calls to a single, nationwide hotline number. Since it was first created in 1994, the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE and [online.rainn.org](https://www.online.rainn.org)) has helped more than 3 million people affected by sexual violence.

Before the telephone hotline was created, there was no central place where survivors could get help. Local sexual assault services providers were well equipped to handle support services, but the lack of a national hotline meant the issue did not receive as much attention as it should. In response, RAINN developed a unique national hotline system to combine all the advantages of a national organization with all the abilities and expertise of local programs. One nationwide hotline number makes it easier for survivors to be connected with the help they deserve.

Anyone affected by sexual assault, whether it happened to you or someone you care about, can find support on the National Sexual Assault Hotline. You can also visit to receive support via confidential online chat.

***YOU ARE A PRINCESS IN GODS EYES!! HE LOVES YOU SO MUCH HE DIED FOR YOU AND ME!***

***ACCEPT HIS CROWN OF HEALING AND LOVE***



## Declarations/Verses for healing

- **God loves me**. Deeply and completely. The enemy loves it when I feel shame, condemnation, and self-loathing, but God's Word says I am precious in God's sight—accepted and valued ([Isa. 43:4](#)).
- **God saw my abuse and did not condone it**. Neither should I. I do not have to stay silent or bury the pain and trauma. The Lord hates all wickedness, including my abuser's sinful actions ([Ps. 11:5](#)).
- **I can pray** for wisdom and entrust true justice to the righteous heart of God. He always has the last word—He brings justice to the unrepentant and great mercy to the repentant ([Ps. 103:6](#)).
- **I know I can forgive** others because I have been so greatly forgiven. Bitterness will only make my pain worse and continue to wound others ([Heb. 12:15](#)).
- **I can pray** for my abuser's change of heart and repentance—that my abuser will seek the Lord, turn from wickedness, and learn to live a godly life so God will be glorified ([Luke 6:28](#)).
- **I do not have to live in fear like a victim**. Peace and victory come as I study and rest in who I am in Christ ([Eph. 1:3–8](#)).
- As I **run to the Lord** who sees, heals, and comforts, I can use what the enemy meant for evil to bring glory and praise to God ([Gen. 50:20](#)).
- **I can learn how to** communicate clear, pure boundaries in all relationships and speak truth in love ([Eph. 4:15](#)).
- **I must be aware** of the enemy's schemes to control my responses and defeat me. I must saturate my life with Scripture and remember God's grace is greater than the condemnation I feel ([1 John 3:20](#)).
- **Knowing my thoughts** will control my actions and responses, I must allow God to transform my thinking so I can make daily choices to please Him ([Rom. 12:2](#)).
- **I will grow and heal** as I rub shoulders with godly women who model how to respond with the pure love of Christ and trust the Lord to help me stand in dignity and strength ([1 Peter 3:3–5](#)).
- **I can**, as a member of the Body of Christ, be a part of holding abusers accountable—especially within the church ([Matt. 18:15–17](#)).
- I can also encourage those who still struggle toward freedom from the pain and insecurities that arise out of sexual abuse ([Gal. 6:2](#)).



### Understanding God's Hope and Help for Survivors of Sexual Assault

Are you a survivor of sexual assault seeking hope and comfort? You are not alone. Find God's hope in these bible verses for coping with sexual assault.

**God's Comfort-Psalm 9:9-10** – The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you.

**Isaiah 43:2-3a:** When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God.

**Isaiah 61: 1-3:** The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the suffering and afflicted. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted, to announce liberty to captives, and to open the eyes of the blind. <sup>2</sup> He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of God's favor to them has come, and the day of his wrath to their enemies. <sup>3</sup> To all who mourn in Israel he will give: beauty for ashes; joy instead of mourning; praise instead of heaviness.

**God's Justice-Psalm 82:3-4** "Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. Rescue the poor and helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people.

**Romans 12:19** – Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

**God's Victory > Sinful World-Genesis 6: 11-12** – Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. (NIV)

**John 16:33** – I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."



### Trusting God to Heal the cars of Sexual Abuse

“You need to learn to trust men again.” When she said this just moments after I admitted I had been sexually abused as a child by a man I trusted, I got mad . . . really mad! She didn’t understand the depth of my fear, disgust, anger, and helplessness. She didn’t even acknowledge my emotional scars. As with many women, my scars of abuse felt unique. I was confused about what was normal and used a variety of defense mechanisms to get through life.

If you’ve been sexually abused, you may be coping in one or more of the following ways. You hide or keep people at extreme distances, afraid of being hurt again. You remain numb through adulthood. If married, you find it difficult to respond sexually. You fear biblical submission—afraid of losing control.

You may feel damaged, see yourself as a sex object, flaunt your sexuality, and descend into promiscuity and other sexual sins. Or like me, you pour yourself into being “good” or embrace ministry. You may not understand the power of the gospel and focus instead on pleasing God to gain His favor. You might respond to your abuse with anxiety, depression, self-loathing, self-harming actions, fear of intimacy, homosexuality, indecisiveness, perfectionism, a need to control, eating disorders, or addictions. Satan doesn’t care *how* we react to the sinfulness of sexual abuse . . . as long as we don’t turn to Jesus. The enemy knows that when we find our identity, security, and dignity in Christ, we can live in victory.

**Twisted Thinking**-It took me awhile to get there, though. For years, I felt the need to protect my abuser and not hurt others who loved him. It was twisted thinking, but the enemy delights in warping thoughts. In high school, I had poor interpersonal skills. By college, I felt suicidal and alone. Abuse distorted my image of God and affected my ability to seek and trust Him. My confidence was shattered. After college, I joined Life Action Ministries and began a journey with God that changed my heart and life. One day as I was singing “Do You Know My Jesus?” on stage with the team, I suddenly realized I knew all *about* Jesus, but I didn’t *know Him*. I left the microphone, went to the prayer room, and placed my life in Jesus’ hands. The most astounding changes came as I learned to trust Him with my past hurts.

# Set Free and Healing



**Second Peter 1:3** says, “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.” I’ve discovered everything I need to move forward in grace and strength comes from abiding in God’s presence and the Word of God.

The path to thriving begins with **God-focus, not self-focus**. If we continue to gaze inward, we will always see our scars, but when we gaze on Jesus, we see His scars and remember He died to make us whole again. We can trust this One who loved us so completely.

I’ve grown in Christ, but it hasn’t always been easy. I’ve had many questions, and my heart screamed for answers. **Satan wants us to believe God is not good and does not care, but our Father God is never blind to the sins that hurt His people. He grieves over all sin and hates it.** Sometimes the Lord deals directly with others’ sinful behavior against us; other times, **it’s just not time yet.** In mercy, **God gives even the most evil among us opportunities to turn to Him and repent.**

**My great comfort is that Jesus understands abuse. He suffered *great* abuse and even death to give us life (see **Isa. 53**).** He brings hope for today and tomorrow and, most certainly, hope for dealing in victory with hurtful past circumstances. I am free to love others sincerely and allow the Lord to work in my life *and* my abuser’s life now that I have been set free from the bondage that chained me for so many years,

Although Jesus said He came to give me abundant life (**John 10:10**), sometimes I resort to survival mode when I allow myself to feel ashamed. In those moments, I forget who I am—or rather, *whose* I am. Jesus bore my shame on the cross; I don’t need to bear it for one moment.

**Though scars remain, God gives healing grace.**

*Father God, I ask You to bring victory and healing to those who suffer. Surround them with Your presence, help them see You as You really are, and show them the overcoming power in Your Word. Amen.*

**REVIVE OUR HEARTS WEBSITE: The link below has several videos regarding suffering.**

<https://www.reviveourhearts.com/resource-library/topics/suffering-trials/>

**Answer:** Sexual abuse perpetrated against a child is a deplorable reality of living in a sin-stricken world. The psychological, emotional, spiritual, and physical damage of the abuse remain long after molestation has ended. The Bible speaks vehemently against hurting children and against [sexual sins](#) and perversions of all kinds. It also offers hope for healing and forgiveness.

### Why does child sexual abuse happen?

The short answer to “why” abuse happens is that we live in a world marred by sin. Often, those who molest children have themselves been molested. They may have been hurt in some other way as well and choose to victimize children in an attempt to regain a sense of power or worthiness. Sexual abuse can be the result of anger or selfishness or narcissism. Sometimes, it can even stem from a misguided attempt to find intimacy. Whatever the emotional, familial, or psychological history of the molester, sexual abuse is evil.

**Molestation or sexual abuse is NEVER the fault of the abused child. Many victims of abuse experience shame and guilt.** But children cannot be held responsible for crimes perpetrated against them. This is not to say that victims of abuse are absolved of responsibility for their own actions, including those prompted by scars of the abuse. But there is nothing shameful about having been abused. The shame belongs to the abuser alone.

### How can I heal from being sexually abused?

There is hope and healing in Christ, even for those who have been sexually abused as children. The journey to healing will look different for each person. It begins with a recognition of the abuse and the damage it has done. **Healing continues as the abused person learns to trust Jesus and release the pain to Him. The road is long and will require safe companions, such as a counselor, a pastor, and loving family members.**

Our Savior, Jesus, said that He is the fulfillment of this prophecy: **“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18–19).** **Meditate on those words.**

[Psalm 72:12–14](#) encourages those in pain to call on the Lord: “For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight” (see also [Psalm 22:24](#) and [Psalm 34:18](#)). It requires faith to believe that God sees and that He cares. Coming to a place of acceptance and even forgiveness for one’s abuser will take time, God’s grace, and exerted effort. But it is possible. In Jesus there is healing and freedom. Call out to God in your distress.

**Recommended Resource:** [The Wounded Heart: Hope for Adult Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse by Dan Allender](#)



## I am a victim of abuse. Why do I feel guilty?

**Question:** "I am a victim of abuse. Why do I feel guilty?"

**Answer:** The very nature of [abuse](#), especially sexual abuse, leaves its victims feeling dirty and ashamed, as if they have sinned. **Abuse, by definition, is simply the misuse of something or someone.** That misuse may also involve complications that include some form of victim participation. In ensuing years, when a victim struggles to recover from the abuse, guilt and condemnation about such participation are always waiting. Memories of every word, every decision, and every thought torment a victim, convincing him or her that healing is undeserved. Is it true that past abuse has made victims dirty and sinful? How does God view that abuse?

*Abuse* is a small word that represents a huge spectrum of possibilities. Most people suffer abuse of some sort during their lives due to the sinful nature of human beings and the fact that we live in a fallen world ([Genesis 3](#); [Romans 5:12](#)). We can be mentally abused by a tyrannical boss, emotionally abused by a rebellious teen, or [spiritually abused](#) by a legalistic church. However, for the purposes of this article, we will focus on the willful physical and psychological abuse inflicted upon another person by someone intent on doing harm. In every abusive situation, there is an abuser (or abusers) and a victim. **A victim is a person who did not choose the actions being perpetrated against him or her. If given a choice, the victim would not participate in such misuse of their personhood.**

We need to qualify this definition for [childhood sexual abuse](#). Many victims who were children at the time of the abuse suffer tremendous amounts of guilt because, at some point during the ongoing abuse, they may have in some way participated, found it pleasurable, or even sought to continue it. The self-loathing that follows such a childhood is overwhelming for victims when they reach adulthood. It is critical for such victims of childhood sexual abuse to realize that no child is capable of understanding and consenting to adult decisions regarding sexuality. **The child is *always* the innocent victim, regardless of how he or she remembers the events.** The adult or older teen who abused the child bears the entire blame.

In other situations, a victim may experience irrational guilt due to actions leading up to the abuse. For example, a rape victim may scour her memory for something *she* did wrong. In a misguided search for answers, she might wonder if she wore the wrong dress or acted too flirtatiously. **One reason victims try to find a way to blame themselves is our human need to feel in control.** It is a form of survivor's guilt, wherein we relive a tragic situation, trying to find ways we could have made a different choice that may have resulted in a different outcome. Such thinking creates false guilt ([2 Corinthians 7:10](#)). False guilt is one way our enemy, Satan, keeps us in bondage. His lie tells us that, if we were in any way to blame, then we do not deserve healing and forgiveness.

The truth is that we are all to blame every day for our selfish, foolish choices. None of us deserve healing and forgiveness ([Romans 3:10, 23](#)). That's why we need the grace of God ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). God's grace in forgiving us is non-selective. There is no sin too great and no abuse too shameful that the grace and mercy of God cannot cover it ([Psalm 103:12](#)).

We should be honest with ourselves and with God when we are ready to pursue recovery and wholeness. If we truly played some part in what happened, we can confess that as sin, just as we confess any sin, and know that God answers ([1 John 1:9; 5:15](#)). But we must refrain from heaping upon ourselves the guilt that properly belongs to the abuser. **If the abuse occurred in childhood or was inflicted upon us with no participation on our part, then the sin was done *to us* and not *by us*.** We cannot repent for the sin of someone else. Being abused is not sin; abusing someone is sin. There is a huge difference.

Another reason that abuse victims struggle to feel forgiven is found in this common statement: "I know God forgives me, but I cannot forgive myself." Such thinking feels like humility, but it is really the flip-side of pride. What we are saying is, "I know God forgives, but *my* standard is higher than God's. I know that Jesus' death was sufficient to cover all sins—except this one. For this sin, I must punish myself. I must help Jesus pay for it until such a time that I decide I can be forgiven." That is pride, not humility. It takes great humility to accept a pardon we know we don't deserve, yet that is exactly what God offers us. We cannot be saved, forgiven, and restored unless we are willing to humble ourselves before Him and let go of our rights to determine whether or not His offer is sufficient ([1 Peter 5:6; Matthew 23:12; James 4:10](#)).

Those who were abused in childhood can take hold of God's offer of transformation ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)). They can confess any element of their childhood for which they feel guilty, but they must refuse to take responsibility for the sins of others. The childhood victim of abuse was robbed of innocence by those who should have guarded it. He or she needs to know that God is not mad at him or her. As a child, the victim did not have the strength, the knowledge, or the courage to resist the sin, and there is no guilt in simply being a child.

Abuse grieves the heart of our loving God. Jesus warned that those who abuse others and cause them to sin will face His wrath ([Luke 17:2](#)). He offers to draw near to the brokenhearted and comfort those who struggle ([Psalm 34:18](#)). He does not condemn us for the wicked things done to us.

Jesus suffered horrible abuse, and He is able to comfort us when we are abused ([Isaiah 52:14](#); [Hebrews 4:15](#); [John 15:13](#)). He is always interceding for His children and giving grace when we call upon Him ([Romans 8:34](#)). God offers healing and restoration, no matter how great the wound. He promises that, when we come to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ, He strips us of the filthy rags we wear and dresses us in perfect righteousness ([Isaiah 64:6](#); [Corinthians 5:21](#)).

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## What is the biblical fix for sexual brokenness?



Individuals who realize their lives are sexually broken can also seek healing in the Lord. [Psalm 23:3](#) says of the Lord our Shepherd: "He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." **God is the Restorer of broken people. To restore means to make as though new, and there are several ways that God makes sexually broken people new:**

1. He renews our minds through His Word ([Romans 12:1-2](#)). He replaces old thought patterns with His truth. Lies that once kept us in bondage are now recognized as lies and rejected ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#)). **Destructive thinking that led to depression, addiction, or promiscuity can be replaced with godly thoughts and self-worth as biblical truth takes root and grows.**
2. He heals our attitudes about our bodies. A body that once brought shame becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit when we surrender our lives to Him ([1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#)). We learn to value our bodies, and **we realize we were created for God's purpose and pleasure ([Colossians 1:16](#)), not as a toy for someone else.**

**Sexual Abuse Information from the Internet** – Helpful Articles, Phone Numbers for Help and other pertinent information – Copied directly from the Internet – Copied by Salt Shakin Sister Outreach Ministry

3. Once restored, we **set healthy boundaries for our own sexuality**. We recognize that sex is a good gift from a loving Creator and, when used wrongly, only wounds our souls. We obey the command to “flee from sexual immorality” ([1 Corinthians 6:18](#)). We recommit ourselves to purity in body and soul and set wise boundaries in order not to “make provision for the flesh and its lusts” ([Romans 13:14](#)).

Part of healing from sexual brokenness is to allow God’s Word, not our culture, to define [sexual immorality](#). If we are to be followers of Christ, we look only to Him for direction ([Hebrews 12:2](#)). It matters not what culture thinks, what celebrities do, or what our neighbors approve. It only matters what God says, and it is His approval we seek if we want to remain sexually healed.

**Recommended Resource:** [Why True Love Waits by Josh McDowell..](#)

**Women -** [Every Young Woman’s Battle: Guarding Your Mind, Heart, and Body in a Sex-Saturated World by Shannon Ethridge](#)

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## SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE BIBLE



Sexual abuse has been a plague on society for thousands of years. Even the Old Testament of the Bible contains tragic stories of sexual abuse, rape, and incest. In 2 Samuel, scriptures tell us that Amnon, the son of David, contrived to get his half-sister, Tamar, alone and have sex with her.

*But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her, and said to her, ‘Come, lie with me, my sister.’ She answered him, ‘No, my brother, do not force me; for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do anything so vile!...But he would not listen to her; and being stronger than she was, he forced her and lay with her...Her brother Absalom said to her, ‘Has Amnon your brother been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this to heart.’ So Tamar remained, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom’s house. – 2 Samuel 13:11-12, 14, 20*

Even in those ancient days, victims were told to **keep the abuse a secret**. Interestingly enough, Scripture continues to talk about the brothers, the father, and the consequences for them, but not much more is said of Tamar. Scripture simply tells us that she remained desolate in her brother’s house; she is locked in the silence, shame, violation, and trauma of the abuse she suffered at the hands of her half-brother.

*The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners...to provide for those who mourn in Zion – to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. – Isaiah 61:1, 3*

Thousands of years later, untold millions of children and adolescents are victims of sexual abuse and carry the wounds of that abuse into their adulthood, living in the same desolate condition as Tamar. In sharp contrast to remaining desolate, is Christ's promise of healing for those who are wounded. Isaiah 61:1,3 beautifully describes the promise of transformation and healing through our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. God is beckoning us to accept his offer for healing, and to walk with one another along that healing journey...out of the darkness and silence, into his light with voices raised in hope and joy.

## **Gently: Biblical guidance and strategies for aiding those who have been sexually abused-by Dr. Amy Baker**

Women in your congregation who have been abused, assaulted, molested, or raped carry a tremendous burden. Without biblical help, these dear women are left to struggle with shame, fear, ragged emotions, difficulty trusting, impaired relationships, regret, self-blame, sexual difficulties, depression, nightmares, and an overwhelming lack of hope.

**Frequently, abused women find it hard to develop relationships at church or one-on-one friendships.** If a woman who has been traumatized gets married, her abuse won't affect just her; it will be something that affects her husband and children. **Abuse often spills its ugliness into every relationship the abused woman forms.**

As Christians, we are not people who God created to live as isolated individuals. We're part of a body, and the body works together. Paul says of the body of Christ, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it" ([1 Cor. 12:26](#)). **Ministering to a victim of abuse necessitates a willingness to suffer with another member of the body.**

**Understanding the situation-Each story of abuse is unique.** Kate was abused as a child by her stepparent. Monique was date-raped. Stacia was an adolescent girl hanging out with neighborhood boys who molested her. Each story, and each woman, is different. Yet, these women often battle similar patterns and problems. Here are some of the similar elements that you may hear in the stories of these women.

**Fear-**An abused woman will likely experience some level of fear in her life after abuse. She may feel fear of her abuser, **fear of the reaction of others, fear that it will happen again, fear that others will think she wanted it,** or a more generalized fear. **She might be experiencing nightmares or even flashbacks of the events.**

**Self-blame**-The woman may be thinking, “I must have done something to cause this, or this wouldn’t have happened to me.” It’s easy for an abused woman to feel isolated, convinced that she is different from others. She may believe that this wouldn’t have happened if she were like everybody else.

**Control**-Feelings of shame and pain may lead to strong desires for control. Many women have a desire to always be in control because they don’t ever want to go through abuse again.

**Avoidance**-It may be that the pain is so intense that the abused woman turns to substance abuse to try to alleviate it. She may have jumped into a relationship or marriage trying to escape her abuser. Or she may attempt to bury the past by pretending everything’s okay. Sadly, everything is not okay.

**Remembering there is hope**-The traumatized woman’s burden can be met with hope. The psalmist reminds us, “Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you” ([Ps. 55:22](#)). Hope grows as this precious woman develops a deep, deep intimacy with her Savior and Redeemer.

As this happens, out of her suffering will arise loveliness and hope that confidently communicates the ability of our King to bring beauty out of ashes. She will be living proof that He brings restoration.

Restoration means that over time the abused woman is not functioning in life as someone who is only a victim. Of course, she’s been victimized, but by God’s grace she’s been able to move beyond being only a victim. She can live with joy and hope. She’s able to establish relationships that are authentic, not shallow. Incredibly, not only is she able to function well in her own sphere, she’s also able to help others take steps in that same direction. She displays the splendor of God ([Isa. 61:3](#)).

In [2 Corinthians 1:3–4](#), Paul says: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” So here she is; she’s a person who has been through something horrendous, but God has graciously brought beauty out of ashes in her life, and now she is able to come alongside others who may have experienced something similar.